



About Paul Diffley, Hot Aches

Paul on climbing:

Paul Diffley's first experienced climbing with his school's outdoor pursuits club and the local Scout group. When he left school at 16 he spent a formative two weeks camping in the Llanberis Pass which is when he says he first began to consider himself a climber and he's not looked back since.

Paul says: "I've tried all sorts of climbing - trad, sport, bouldering and even dry tooling. In fact, it was dry tooling that got me into filmmaking. My first film 'Fools with Tools' (2004) was about me and some friends attempting Scot Muir's tooling test piece 'Fast and Furious'. Going to the Banff Mountain Film Festival with 'Fools' really opened my eyes to the world of mountain film."

Paul on Odyssey:

"My latest film 'Odyssey' feels like a big undertaking. On one hand it's a fairly simple premise - you take a group of world class climbers on a road trip around some of the UK's best trad venues and film it."

"But with four climbers, four filmmakers, one driver and a base camp manager I'm actually having to manage the logistics for a team of ten! Luckily, it's a great team. On the climbing side we have James Pearson, Hazel Findlay, Hansjörg Auer (Austria) and Caroline Ciavaldini (France). Behind the camera I'm joined by Matt Pycroft, Dom Bush and Matt Sharman."

"'Odyssey' also marks a slight strategic shift for Hot Aches since I am not directing but instead taking only the role of producer. My aim is will allow Hot Aches to produce more titles each year without the management (i.e. me!) going into meltdown. On this film at least, I'll be able to outsource some of the pain!"

"I've also been planning a major feature which I hope will break out of the climbing and mountain film world to reach a wider audience. I can't say much about it yet but the gist is 'Trainspotting meets Touching the Void!'"

Paul on film-making:

"Over the last six years I've been very lucky to witness and record some phenomenal climbing. The life-changer for me was Dave MacLeod's first ascent of Rhapsody, the finale to my first major film 'E11' (2006). I was working in IT and took advantage of the flexible hours to follow and film Dave's attempts on the route for nearly two years. That gave me the confidence to quit the IT job and set up Hot Aches Productions."

"I get completely obsessed with whatever film I'm working on. When I was editing 'Wide Boyz' (featuring Pete Whittaker and Tom Randall) my head was full of off-width climbing and Century Crack. Now I'm immersed in the world of trad climbing with Odyssey. But I know once that's in the bag I'll be on to something else which I'll be equally obsessed by."



I think I have a bit of an all-or-nothing personality which seems to suit the filmmaking process."

"Technology wise it has never been cheaper or easier to make a climbing film. I think, though, it is still very difficult to make a living doing so. Over the last 6 years I've seen many people produce one DVD or maybe a couple of festival shorts before moving on. I suppose for the majority, it just doesn't pay."

"It's a very interesting time to be a filmmaker. Video technology is changing very quickly and with the growth of social media, video on demand, crowd funding and the decline of long-established broadcast and distribution models I believe there has never been a more exciting time to be an independent filmmaker."

"For me filmmaking is about story and emotion. These key elements are not affected by how many pixels are displayed, the average bit rate of your camera or even how shallow the depth of field is! Of course I value good camera work and strive to produce my films with the highest possible production values, but story and emotion will always come first."

"I consider myself primarily a storyteller; film is just the medium. Fortunately, climbing seems to generate a seemingly endless supply of great stories. I think that's why I don't make ski films or mountain bike films or, for that matter, bouldering films! Think of all the great climbing stories, how many of those are about bouldering? That said, I am not ruling out Hot Aches ever producing a bouldering film; with the right subject and the right story I would certainly consider it. It's got to be easier than shooting on St Johns Head or The Ben in winter!"

"One of the things I love most about my job is meeting and working with top climbers. I find them fascinating documentary subjects: driven, often complex, and always remarkable. I strive to understand them and portray them accurately as individuals. I'm not interested in showing them as two dimensional pin-ups."

ENDS

- More about Hot Aches <http://www.hotaches.com/>
- Odyssey will be screened at The Climbing Works (Little London Road, Sheffield, S8 0UJ tel 0114 250 9990) on Saturday 10th November in association with Heason Events. Tickets now on sale: <http://www.climbingworks.com/shop/media/books/lectures/odyssey-premiere/>. £5 (£4 concession). Doors open at 8pm. Talk starts 8.30pm and film starts 9pm.
- Download web and high res images & poster from Odyssey here: <http://flic.kr/s/aHsjCkwTEy>

